

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NAIROB 10623 012041Z

56

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 10623

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KE

SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT MOI'S ADVERSARIES CALL FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT

REF: NAIROBI A-81

1. FIRST PUBLIC SALVO IN WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN
ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN TO BRING DOWN VICE PRESIDENT
DANIEL ARAP MOI AND REMOVE HIM FROM THE SUCCESSION
PICTURE WAS FIRED AT A KANU PUBLIC RALLY IN NAKURU
SEPTEMBER 26. RALLY WAS ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 20 MPS,
3 CABINET MINISTERS, LEADERS OF TRIBAL ASSOCIATIONS,
AND THOUSANDS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS. (PRESIDENT
KENYATTA WAS NO LONGER IN NAKURU WHEN THE RALLY TOOK
PLACE.)

2. A SUCCESSION OF PROMINENT PERSONALITIES,
INCLUDING NJOROGE MUNGAI, (THE PRESIDENT'S NEPHEW),
PAUL NGEL, MINISTER FOR COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND
CURRENTLY STRONGEST OF THE KAMBA LEADERS; JACKSON
ANGAINE, MINISTER OF LANDS AND SETTLEMENT AND A POWER-
FUL MERU LEADER; AND JAMES GICHURU, MINISTER FOR
DEFENCE ADDRESSED THE RALLY AND CALLED FOR A CON-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NAIROB 10623 012041Z

STITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE THE

LANGUAGE ON SUCCESSION WHICH PROVIDES THAT IF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT BECOMES VACANT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE WOULD BE FILLED ON AN INTERIM BASIS BY THE VICE PRESIDENT. NO SPECIFIC ALTERNATE LANGUAGE WAS PROPOSED, NOR WAS MOI'S NAME MENTIONED BY SPEAKERS AT THE RALLY, BUT THERE COULD HAVE BEEN NO OTHER TARGET. IT IS EXPECTED THAT A PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WILL BE INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT BEFORE NEXT KANU RALLY SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN MERU OCTOBER 10.

3. KANU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER, WHO ATTENDED RALLY, TOLD EMBOFF THAT POWERFUL PEOPLE IN KENYA WERE AFRAID OF MOI AND WERE DETERMINED TO ENSURE THAT HE DID NOT BECOME PRESIDENT. SOURCE ALSO SAID, WITHOUT ELABORATING, THAT PRESIDENT KENYATTA WAS UNHAPPY WITH MOI. HE ADDED THAT GROUP OF PEOPLE BEHIND NAKURU RALLY WERE SAME ONES WHO LAST YEAR ARRANGED FOR POLICE TO BE REMOVED FROM MOI'S JURISDICTION. SOURCE SAID PROSPECTS FOR PASSAGE OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ARE UNCERTAIN, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THIS POWERFUL GROUP IS DETERMINED TO DEMONSTRATE TO PRESIDENT KENYATTA THAT MOI NO LONGER HAS PUBLIC SUPPORT AND TO CAUSE HIS DOWNFALL ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

4. COINCIDENTALLY, AMBASSADOR LUNCHEDED WITH MOI SEPTEMBER 27. VICE PRESIDENT EVIDENCED NO PARTICULAR CONCERN ABOUT NAKURU DEVELOPMENT. HE DISCOUNTED POSSIBILITY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WOULD BE PASSED.

5. COMMENT: POLITICS OF PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION HAVE BEEN HEATING UP RECENTLY (SEE RECENTLY DRAFTED REF AIRGRAM). PRESIDENT KENYATTA HAS POWER TO REMOVE MOI, WHOM HE APPOINTED AS VICE PRESIDENT, AT WILL. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS HE HAS NOT YET, AT LEAST, BEEN CONVINCED TO DO SO. NONETHELESS, MOI'S ADVERSARIES, WHO ARE INDEED POWERFUL HAVE NOW LAUNCHED THE KIND OF PUBLIC ATTACK ON HIS POSITION WHICH MAY WELL BRING THE MATTER TO A HEAD AND FORCE THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE SIDES. IN THAT EVENT IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE HIM SIDING WITH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NAIROB 10623 012041Z

MOI AGAINST WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE KIAMBU KIKUYU ESTABLISHMENT AND ITS ALLIES. INDEED, KENYATTA MAY HAVE INSPIRED ENTIRE CAMPAIGN TO CREATE IMPRESSION THAT PURGE OF MOI FORCED UPON HIM.
MARSHALL

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